



## RSAl Legislative Update Feb. 25, 2016

These updates are posted on the RSal legislative web page at <http://www.rsaia.org/legislative.html>. The following provides news of this week's statehouse action as floor debate in the House and Senate followed last Friday's funnel deadline. Lots of action on little bills impacting education, but very little about priority areas for RSal. Thanks for all you do to advocate for Iowa's children! [margaret.buckton@isfis.net](mailto:margaret.buckton@isfis.net)

**District Flexibility:** [SF 2200](#) was approved in the Senate, on a unanimous vote. The bill, of primary benefit to rural schools, would allow districts to offer online learning coursework to meet offer and teach requirements, based on the district making a good-faith effort but unable to hire a teacher and the DE granting a waiver. Districts are already allowed to use Iowa Learning on-Line program courses for this purpose, but in the event Iowa Learning on-Line doesn't offer the course needed or the course is full, then the district could substitute another online learning course to meet the requirements. The House took up the bill this afternoon and through amendment, added the requirement that the course content be provided by an Iowa-licensed teacher with online learning experience. The bill as amended goes back to the Senate.

**Other priorities:** Transportation and district cost per pupil equity, both priorities of RSal, are now included in the Governor's water quality bill and the Education Committee's version of SAVE extension. See below for details. School Funding for FY 2017 is still in conference committee, but we expect movement soon. See talking points below. Also the Education Coalition posted a publication this week to help advocates, stakeholders and legislators better understand inflationary and staff costs of school districts. RSal is part of the coalition and has posted the issue on the RSal legislative page: [Education Funding and the Cost of Doing Business](#)

The list of bills impacting education that received chamber approval this week follows:

### Bills Approved by the Senate

- [SF 2009 PK for 5-year Olds](#): this bill allows five-year old children who had not attended preschool to be enrolled in the statewide voluntary preschool program. The bill is effective for school years beginning July 1, 2017. The bill was amended to be immediately effective (beginning July 1, 2016) and approved in the Senate unanimously. RSal is undecided.
- [SF 2136 Mandatory Vaccinations](#): this bill requires 7-12<sup>th</sup> graders enrolling in school to have a Meningococcal Vaccination before enrollment. The Senate approved the bill with 45 senators in favor and 4 opposed. RSal is undecided.
- [SF 2163 BOEE Rule Nullification](#): this bill prohibits BOEE from increasing license fees for two years and limits their carry forward. The bill was passed unanimously in the Senate. RSal is undecided.
- [SF 2195 Dating Violence Curriculum](#): this bill requires districts to include age-appropriate information regarding dating violence and prevention in their local human growth and development instruction. The bill was passed unanimously in the Senate. RSal is undecided.
- [SF 2196 Teacher Prep Reading](#): this bill specifies reading and literacy requirements to meet needs of all students (dyslexia, ELL, students with disabilities) in practitioner preparation programs. The bill was passed unanimously in the Senate. RSal supports this bill.
- [SF 2200 ILO Offer and Teacher Alternatives](#): this bill allows districts to offer an on-line course to meet offer and teacher requirements, if ILO doesn't offer the course or if is full. The bill was passed unanimously in the Senate. RSal supports this bill.
- [SF 2205 Hours/Days Clean up](#): this bill allows hours or days calculation in how long an open enrolled student waits before participating in varsity athletics. The bill was passed unanimously in the Senate. RSal supports this bill.



- **SF 2217 Human Trafficking Reporting:** This bill requires the addition of how to recognize and report incidents of human trafficking involving minors to mandatory reporter training. The resolution was passed unanimously in the Senate. RSAI is undecided.
- **SJR 2006 BOEE Special Ed Endorsement:** this joint resolution nullifies an administrative rule by BOEE establishing a special education endorsement and specializations. The resolution was passed unanimously in the Senate. RSAI is undecided.

### **Bills Approved by the House**

- **HF 2263 BOEE Reporting:** this bill adds under the influence on school grounds or at school sponsored activity to disciplinary actions taken against a licensed school employee that are required to be reported to BOEE. 96 House members voted for the bill, 0 opposed. RSAI supports this bill.
- **HF 2264 Varsity Eligibility/Open Enrollment:** this bill allows students subjected to a founded harassment or bullying event to immediately participate in varsity athletics based on district of residence findings. The House passed this bill with 96 votes in favor and 1 opposed. RSAI is undecided on this bill.
- **HF2268 PERB Records:** this bill, requested by PERB, makes evidence submitted to PERB related to the certification or decertification of a union a confidential record. House approved the bill 97 in favor and none opposed. RSAI will continue to monitor this bill which has a companion bill in the Senate.
- **HF 2273: SOS bill:** Election clean up involving board member appointed to fill a vacancy and was approved in the House with 96 votes in favor and 0 opposed. RSAI supports this bill.
- **HF 2312 PD Supplement Flexibility:** this bill allows the per pupil professional development supplement to pay for textbooks or curriculum if purchase includes free PD. The House approved the bill with 58 votes in favor and 39 opposed. RSAI supports this bill.
- **SF 2200 ILO Offer and Teacher Alternatives:** this bill allows districts to offer an on-line course to meet offer and teacher requirements, if ILO doesn't offer the course or if it full. The House amended the bill to require the course be taught by an Iowa licensed teacher with online teaching experience, then unanimously approved in the House. RSAI supports this bill.

### **Now Assigned to Appropriations Committee**

- **SF2237 PK Expansion Incentive Program:** this bill creates a PK incentive for 3 years (beginning 2017-18) during which growth in PK enrollment compared to the base year is weighted an extra 0.1 in addition to the 0.5 weighting. The bill also requires the district to pass through 90% of the cost per pupil to community providers compared to 95% in current law. The bill has been assigned to Senate Appropriations. RSAI supports this bill.

### **School Funding Status. RSAI is registered in favor of 4% and opposed to 2%. No action this week.**

Conference Committee for FY 2017: [SF 174](#) and [SF 175](#) originally set the increase in the state per pupil cost and categorical funds at 4%. House is at 2%. Conference committee appointees include: Reps. Jorgensen, Dolecheck, Stanerson, Ruff, and Winckler and Sens. Bowman, Dvorsky, Quirnbach, Kraayenbrink, and Sinclair. Although the committee met for an organizational meeting to appoint chairs, weeks ago, they have not reconvened since. The chairs from the House and Senate have been talking regularly. We expect something to break the log jam very soon. *Keep talking with legislators about timing, adequacy and equity of funding.*

[SF 2092](#) and [SF 2093](#) set 4% for categoricals and regular program district cost for FY 2018 were approved by the Senate and sent to the House.

Messages to House and Senate, both sides of the aisle, regarding the need for adequate and timely funding, are encouraged. Key talking points:

- Thanks for getting the school funding discussion started early in Session. Keep at it ☺
- Thanks to the Senate for approving bills at 4% for FY 2018.



- Five of the last six years have included per pupil increases below the cost of doing the business of schools. A 2% increase would extend that track record to 6 out of 7.
- Districts with declining enrollment are even worse off, having to make more program and staff reductions to live within tighter constraints.
- In the last five years, state net revenue growth has averaged 4.1% while the cost per pupil growth has averaged 2.0%. Add in the current year 1.25% increase in per pupil cost and 3.3% REC estimate and that spread continues: six year average SSA is 1.87% and state net revenue growth is 3.9%. Schools haven't experienced the economic recovery that the state has enjoyed.
- To put students and opportunities first, schools need adequate, predictable and timely funding.

**RSAI Advocacy Resources:** RSAI has updated the legislative page of our website with sample parent letters on adequate school funding, transportation and district cost per pupil inequities. Instructions for writing to legislators are include in the packet found here [Sample Parent Letters on School Funding](#). Also, the transportation and formula equity toolkit has been updated to include the FY 2015 transportation report from the DE. Find those resources here: <http://www.rsaia.org/legislative.html>

### **Governor's SAVE/Water Quality Bill**

[HF 2382](#) been amended an approved 13:9 by House Agriculture. It has been assigned to House Ways and Means. Here are the bill details impacting SAVE which begin on page 8 of the bill:

- FY17 amount to SAVE is the same as FY 16
- Beginning July 1, 2017, the 6<sup>th</sup> penny allocation to SAVE increases \$10 million annually
- Extends the sixth penny until Jan. 1, 2050
- Adds "Water quality" to the list of allowable uses for the 6<sup>th</sup> penny.
- Application of the PTER fund carve out, currently 2.1% of SAVE fund per Iowa Code 423F.2(3) will no longer apply to the entire SAVE amount, which lowers resources for school property tax inequities.
- The bill allows district flexibility for a per pupil school equity budget adjustment (up to \$175 or however far below the state's maximum per pupil cost a district is) and transportation equity flexibility for local districts with excessive transportation costs to access SAVE funds (after adding the use to a Revenue Purpose Statement approved by voters.) Additional limitations on use of the flexibility funds are too restrictive. Although RSAI approves of the restriction exempting these funds from collective bargaining, we support use for any general fund purpose.
- The bill requires any SAVE fund purchase or project in excess of \$1 million in cost to have a specific revenue purpose statement, including commencement and conclusion date and maximum amount of funds to be spent on the purpose or project, approved by a 60% super majority of voters. Although RSAI was not excited about the water quality provision prior, this provision alone would be sufficient for RSAI to oppose the bill (and RSAI is registered opposed.)
- Water quality impacts: All additional growth beyond school infrastructure goes to 3 areas:
  - 25% to wastewater and drinking water treatment finance assistance fund
  - 25% to water quality financing program fund
  - 50% to Dept. of Agriculture and Land Stewardship for water quality infrastructure cost share program, assisting land owners with implementing water quality practice and water quality demonstration projects
- The bill now requires a 10-year review and reporting requirements for water quality programs.

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